

□ **Luke 10:22 (ESV)**

*“All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”*

This verse highlights the exclusive authority and divine knowledge shared between the Father and the Son. Jesus is not merely a prophet—He is the **eternal Son of God**, uniquely qualified to reveal the Father. Salvation and knowledge of God come through Him alone (John 14:6).

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□ **John 13:3 (NIV)**

*“Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God.”*

This passage occurs just before Jesus washes the disciples' feet. It confirms Christ's **pre-existence**, **divine mission**, and **authority over all creation**—a clear affirmation of His divinity. He is the Alpha and the Omega (Revelation 22:13), returning to the glory He shared with the Father before the world began (John 17:5).

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▮ Revelation 5:1-14 (ESV, summarized)

In this vision, the apostle John sees a scroll in the right hand of God the Father, sealed with seven seals. No one in heaven or on earth is worthy to open it—except **the Lamb of God**, Jesus Christ.

This scene reveals two key theological truths:

1. **Christ's worthiness comes from His redemptive work on the cross.**

The Lamb who was slain (Revelation 5:6, 9) purchased people from every tribe, tongue, and nation—fulfilling God's plan of redemption (Isaiah 53:5-6; John 1:29).

2. **Christ alone has the authority to execute God's final judgment and redemption plan.**

He holds the scroll containing the destiny of the world. As both Redeemer and Judge (John 5:22-23), He fulfills the role of the Messiah in full.

## □ **Where Do the Righteous Dead Go?**

When a believer dies today, their soul goes to **Paradise**—a place of peace and rest in the presence of God, also referred to as **Abraham's bosom** (Luke 16:22-25). This is not yet the final, eternal heaven described in Revelation 21-22, but a temporary dwelling in God's presence.

□ 2 Corinthians 5:8 (ESV)

*"Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord."*

This affirms that believers immediately enter into conscious fellowship with Christ upon death, though the **resurrection of the body** awaits Christ's return (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

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## □ **Who Is in Heaven Now?**

It is biblically sound to say that the **heavenly city—the New Jerusalem**—is not yet occupied by the saints in bodily form. Jesus

ascended to the Father and is now seated at His right hand (Hebrews 1:3), preparing a place for His people.

□ John 14:2-3 (NIV)

*“My Father’s house has many rooms... I am going there to prepare a place for you... I will come back and take you to be with me.”*

This suggests that the **final destination of believers is still being prepared** and will be unveiled at Christ’s Second Coming (cf. Revelation 21:2). While the souls of the righteous are with the Lord, their final glorified state (resurrected bodies in a new heaven and new earth) is yet to be realized (Romans 8:23).

Even those who were taken without dying—**Enoch** (Genesis 5:24) and **Elijah** (2 Kings 2:11)—were taken into **Paradise**, not the final heaven. This aligns with Jesus’ statement:

□ John 3:13 (NIV)

*“No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man.”*

At the time Jesus spoke these words, **no human had entered the fullness of God’s heavenly dwelling**, except Christ Himself, who came from there.

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## □ What About Visions of Heaven?

Many believers have claimed to see heaven through dreams or visions. While we don’t dismiss the possibility of **God-given visions** (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17), it’s crucial to interpret them rightly.

*Visions are symbolic. They are spiritual revelations, not literal visits.*

Just as John saw “streets of gold” and “gates of pearl” (Revelation 21:21), these symbols reflect divine glory, purity, and majesty—not

necessarily physical descriptions. People may see images of heavenly beauty, but that does not mean they've physically been there. It's similar to watching a video of a foreign country—you've seen it, but you haven't actually been there.

God speaks through symbols to communicate truths that surpass human language (1 Corinthians 2:9-10).

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### □ **The Righteous Await Final Glorification**

Many of the heroes of faith—Abraham, Moses, David—have not yet received the fullness of God's promise.

□ **Hebrews 11:39-40 (NIV)**

*"These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised, since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect."*

The saints who died in faith are waiting for the resurrection, when all

God's people will be **glorified together** (Romans 8:17; Philippians 3:20-21). This will occur at the **Second Coming of Christ**, when the dead in Christ will rise, and those who are alive will be caught up (raptured) to meet the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

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## □ What's at Stake?

The return of Christ and the rapture of the Church will be a glorious event for the faithful—but a moment of terror and regret for those who missed their opportunity.

Jesus warned of this day repeatedly:

□ Matthew 24:44 (ESV)

*"Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."*

For those left behind, eternal separation from God awaits—a place the Bible calls the **lake of fire** (Revelation 20:15).

## □ What Should You Do?

### **Repent. Turn back to God today.**

If you're reading this and know you're not walking with Christ—don't delay. The invitation to salvation is still open, but it will not last forever.

□ 2 Peter 3:9 (NIV)

*"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise... He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."*

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## □ Conclusion: Press Toward What Has Been Prepared

Let us not live as if this world is our home. Jesus is preparing something far greater—new bodies, a new heaven, and a new earth (Revelation 21:1-5). But only those who **remain faithful** and are found in Him will share in that glory.

We are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses (Hebrews 12:1). Let's



run our race with perseverance, fix our eyes on Jesus, and not grow weary. Paradise is real, heaven is being prepared, and **Jesus is coming soon.**

## Will you be ready?

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□ “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, I am coming soon.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.” (Revelation 22:20, NIV)

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